

1 Each of the states and the federal agencies
 2 involved looked at what future changes and operations may
 3 occur, and that included the change in transfer diversion,
 4 as I previously said, of 1.574 million acre feet of water a
 5 year. We didn't say who that water would go to. We didn't
 6 say what agency it would be involved in that transfer.

7 If that transfer occurs, it will have to undergo a
 8 separate environmental review. That is not that. This is
 9 not the program that's being reviewed tonight. What's being
 10 reviewed tonight is solely the Endangered Species Program.

11 Any other comments?

12 (One hand raised.)

13 MR. VANDERHORST: Yes, ma'am.

14 MS. OCHS: I'm Carey Ochs, O-c-h-s

15 C-a-r-e-y. I live at 5120 Colorado River Road. My husband
 16 and I are landowners out there. I guess my primary concern
 17 is I just basically wanted to know what the effects of the
 18 implementation in our local community is going to be. I
 19 think that may be what a lot of people are questioning.

20 The idea of recreation, of water rights; boating,
 21 swimming on the river. I think a lot of people are
 22 concerned that was going to get shut down. We had a little
 23 scare with the radio announcement today. I think a lot of
 24 people flocked here. We are all up in arms thinking that --
 25 what your primary goal was.

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1 Personally, I think it's a great plan as long as
 2 it doesn't impede our rights as landowners and as members of
 3 the community that love living in this small-town
 4 environment and this slow-pace lifestyle with no smog and,
 5 you know, little pollution, to utilize our river in a
 6 recreational manner. That's what our concerns primary are.

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8 One of my concerns, however, upon reading this -- And
 9 this is really complicated to the layman when you read this.
 10 It really doesn't talk about any of the possible effects of
 11 the implementation in our local community. It
 12 sounds great when you put it up an announced -- you talk
 13 about saving birds, fish. I don't think anybody in the room
 14 would, you know, think that's a wrong thing to do; but when
 15 you look at a study that -- or a plan of action that we are
 16 going to -- it's going to be voted in, it's going to be
 17 official, it's going to last 50 years, how would that impact
 18 us down the road. And
 19 there's a concern of mine as a landowner to say, okay.
 20 Well, maybe the marsh lands aren't cutting it. Maybe you
 21 have to go a little further north up -- down the river. You
 22 need a little more land, and, you know, it's a concern of
 23 ours.
 24 I mean, how -- What if it didn't work initially and they
 25 decide to widen the scope or implement some stricter

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1 standards down the road? What guarantee do we have that | Blythe-24 con't
 2 this initial thing is going to be what it is and as you said | Blythe-25
 3 30 years down the road I'm going to still be living here.
 4 Thirty years down the road. Does that mean in 30 years they
 5 could decide that, you know, we are not going to be able to
 6 utilize the river in a recreational manner because -- I
 7 guess that's my concern.

8 MR. VANDERHORST: Okay. Let me just say that
 9 for a description -- and I understand that it's a very --
 10 it's a very large document -- set of documents actually.

11 MS. OCHS: And I haven't read them. I'll add
 12 that.

13 MR. VANDERHORST: I understand that. What I
 14 would say to you is that for your concerns about, for
 15 example, recreational issues. If you want to go to the
 16 document and focus on the section that deals with
 17 recreation, that would be the best way to get as many
 18 answers as you can.

19 For what is going to happen in this particular
 20 community, there -- right now there's not a whole lot of
 21 detail because we don't know exactly where each of the
 22 restoration projects are going to go.

23 There will be an environmental review when a site
 24 is selected that we think is a good place to put one, and
 25 then you will have another opportunity to participate at

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1 that time.

2 The program, if there is any significant change,
3 this -- the program, it has to go through another
4 environmental review under California law and under federal
5 law as well. So if you pay attention, as you obviously
6 have, to the public notices that are put out in the local
7 newspapers and to the local press, um, you will hear when
8 there's a proposal to change the program because it would go
9 out again for public review.

10 MR. HARRIS: I think the other thing, too, if
11 you look at these and you kind of look at some of the areas
12 that we've identified as potential restoration sites, 35,000
13 acres total. We only need 8,000. We are not going to pound
14 a square peg into a round hole. We are really going to look
15 at the issues, the local issues, the federal issues and make
16 sure that what you did in a particular area is a great fit.

17 You know, if you've got a big chunk of habitat you
18 want to put out, southwestern willow flycatcher, you may not
19 want to put it in an agricultural area where you got
20 pesticide drift or something else you are doing for birds
21 and bunnies where the birds and bunnies are running out in
22 the field and preying on the farmers crops. You know,
23 that's probably not a good mix.

24 So I think those the criteria that we've developed
25 so far, the preliminary criteria to identify these sites are

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1 in here, and they kind of lay out the rules of the road for
2 us going out and looking at these areas.

3 And I think if you look at those, I think you'll
4 see that we addressed -- we sure attempted to address it.
5 We hear that --

6 MR. VANDERHORST: Yes.

7 (One hand raised.)

8 MS. CORBETT: Sandy Corbett from Cibola,
9 Arizona. I live a mile from the wildlife refuge down there
10 and a mile from the river. Our family had -- This is for
11 more -- kind of just share with you like your concerns about
12 what might happen. I can't say what will happen. I
13 appreciate your plan.

14 Really just to share with you another experience
15 that happened up north to my family. Our family had got a
16 permanent -- we won a permanent injunction from the Federal
17 Court. Willow Beach -- If this is the top of this map, they
18 are talking about, and that's within the national park
19 actually, but it was set up as Lake Mead National Recreation
20 area.

21 When they were going to close out these home -- It
22 used to be a camp. We use to fish along the river.
23 Apparently striper came over when the damn overflowed and
24 got in on the other side. It used to be great Trout
25 fishing. Now tons of Striper fish.

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1 There was a thing to protect these endangered fish
2 and so forth. It turned into affecting all kinds of things
3 what we found out. We formed -- we were concerned about
4 saving our recreation on the river. That's a lot of what
5 you guys are talking about.

6 We formed an organization which was a nonprofit
7 organization. We made a corporation in Arizona. We
8 actually fought the National Park Service. We went to
9 Federal Court in Phoenix, um, and we all lost our homes.
10 Those homes were there before it was a national recreation
11 area. The homes were shut down.

12 Part of the plan was like we are looking at the
13 plan here. Not to say -- I'm just giving you some
14 feedback -- was to keep boat docks in and do this stuff.
15 That was part of the master plan. When the public hearing
16 and so forth, and none of that has been restored. None of
17 it has been restored up there.

18 They turned it into a day-use only area. You have
19 to pay a fee. You can't stay over night there anymore.
20 These issues about hundred-year flood documents for public
21 safety. The Federal Government has to think of those things
22 for public safety, but essentially what we are talking about
23 possibly is lack of our use of lands. And that thing was in
24 combination with the National Park Service, the BOR, and the
25 BLM, and by the time when we went through this whole

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1 process, took us three years. We ended up losing our homes.

2 The -- at the end of the process when it got down
3 to it, they hadn't done what was in the plan and we lost our
4 use.

5 So all I'm saying if you can -- and we also found
6 out when it got to the point of public hearing, it was too
7 late. So if there's anything you can do -- I'm going to end
8 it with a question to the gentleman up front, if you can.

9 Just being here I don't think is enough. It is
10 like write public comments if you have a concern. If you
11 don't, it's cool.

12 But if you do, I suggest you write them, get
13 talking, write letters and everything. If you have
14 concerns, try to educate yourselves first because a lot of
15 us need to find out more about it to pass that experience
16 on.

17 So if you can do a written public comment by the
18 18th, like I am suggesting, I am going to encourage you to
19 do it. Anything you can do to educate yourselves.

20 I take it seriously because it does change things,
21 potentially change things, although I'm into, you know,
22 protecting our species, but also we need to protect our
23 usage on the river.

24 The last question is: Public hearing. What, is
25 it too late for anything to happen? What happens after the

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1 public hearings? It's done? Isn't it done? Are we done?

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2 MR. VANDERHORST: No, we are not done.

3 MS. CORBETT: Okay. Tell us what the options
4 are for us that might have concerns about it, how this
5 public here, these people can do something if they are
6 concerned about it or not, what are the steps they can take
7 to do that.

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8 MR. VANDERHORST: Right. The reason we are
9 here is to take public input on the program that we drafted.
10 The alternative -- it includes certain alternatives and it's
11 been outlined in considerable detail in those documents that
12 we discussed that are available for your review.

13 We are taking public comments. As we said, at
14 these three hearings, we are taking comments in writing as
15 well. And the process calls for us to accept all of the
16 comments that we received from the public, and then we have
17 to consider them and deal with them; and if they require us
18 to make changes to the program, then we will do so, and then
19 we will issue a final report based on all the input that we
20 received from the public and that will come out sometime
21 hopefully by the end of this year.

22 MS. CORBETT: Can I say one last thing. The
23 final report -- we found out when we did the same step in
24 the final report, what we did say could be included, your
25 letters are going to be included. But when the final report

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1 comes out, it didn't say they can't stop doing what they are
2 doing. They are letting us know about it. I'm not saying
3 that as a fact. I am saying that's an experience. That's
4 exactly what happened to us.

5 MR. VANDERHORST: Understood. But please do
6 submit your comments. That's the reason for this process is
7 so we can get that input; and if your concern is
8 recreational access to the river, make sure that you let us
9 know you have a concern that you not lose recreational
10 access to the river as a result of our program.

11 (One hand raised.)

12 MR. VANDERHORST: Yes, sir.

13 MR. JOHNSON: Again, Tom Johnson. I'm going
14 to make one more final comment so it's on the record. I
15 believe we should have free use or free access to our river
16 in Blythe. We have no free access and when it seems like we
17 develop something, they close it off; such as, Ox Bow. We
18 no longer have Ox Bow. We can't put our boats in for free.
19 We have to pay a fee down there.

20 Once they get something down there and it looks
21 like it works, you guys get a hold of it and it is no longer
22 free. They charge you for it. We have Goose Flats, is the
23 only place you can put in now for free. You can take your
24 boat, put in, don't have to pay a fee.

25 Seems like around Blythe that all we have is when

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1 you get something that's good, you close it off, and I'm
 2 also concerned again about how they closed Goose Flats and
 3 Ellers off.

4 What they did is they -- by closing both ends off
 5 of both those lakes, that created no flow there. Because
 6 there's no flow, the water temperature gets up in the
 7 90-degrees. Now you don't see the fish. If fish don't
 8 reproduce, well, you don't have Bass. You have the chub or
 9 whatever that is that you are trying to preserve in there.

10 MR. VANDERHORST: Right.

11 MR. JOHNSON: So I want to make sure that
 12 gets on the record as far as public comment. I think we
 13 need free access. I feel like Woody Guthrie; this land is
 14 your land. This land is my land.

15 MR. VANDERHORST: Okay.

16 MR. HARRIS: In fact it is.

17 MR. VANDERHORST: Let me just point out,
 18 though, that again this program is endangered species
 19 program and is not a public recreation program. Um,
 20 certainly submit your comment because it pertains to the
 21 fact you don't want our program to interfere with public
 22 access to the river, but also that kind of issue is one that
 23 should also be brought to the attention of the fish and game
 24 agencies or whatever other agencies are controlling the
 25 access points to the river.

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1 MS. JACOE: Back to her question. I didn't
2 feel like you had responded to a complete answer of what can
3 we do. You said you would be issuing a final report. That
4 doesn't tell us what we can do regarding that final report,
5 and is that going to be what makes the law or do we get an
6 opportunity to be able to change that before it becomes the
7 law?

8 MR. VANDERHORST: That's a hard question to
9 answer because the program isn't changing the law. The
10 purpose of the program is for the agencies to comply with
11 the existing law, and the agencies will have to make the
12 final decision as to what is required for their compliance.

13 Um, we will do that considering all of the public
14 input that we receive, and so eventually the final decision
15 does get made by the agencies but only after we hear from
16 you.

17 MS. CARLTON: Does Metropolitan -- some of
18 the land use along the river, lease land or anything like
19 that?

20 MR. VANDERHORST: Metropolitan has leased
21 land along the arrive. No decision has been made yet as to
22 whether that will be included in the program.

23 (One hand raised.)

24 MR. VANDERHORST: Yes, sir.

25 MR. ANDERSON: My name is Andy Anderson,

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1 A-n-d-e-r-s-o-n.

2 As a long-time resident of this area, born and
3 raised, grew up here, we were able to go and come and do
4 whatever type of recreation fun we liked to do, whether it's
5 mining to fishing to boating to trying to save some -- some
6 little animal. Paton came here, saved our country. We have
7 a free county. He played a very big part of it. He run
8 over every bit of this county including the river.

9 Now, you come along and say you are another
10 agency, a number of a list about this long, that we only
11 want 8,000 more acres. The BLM has wanted hundreds of
12 thousands of acres. So then they come along and take
13 hundreds and thousands of acres wilderness areas because of
14 all these endangered species. We can't go there.

15 But you only want 8,000 more acres. You are into
16 this program, what I am hearing, seven years. It's a
17 50-year program. You are going to retire and pass on. You
18 are going to retire and pass on, somebody is going to move
19 over and take over your shoes and go on. We got to have
20 another 8,000 acres in 20 years, and it's just like the BLM
21 has done, it's like all these other agencies have done.
22 They just continue to take, take, take, take.

23 This boat landing this gentleman is talking about,
24 the BLM didn't have one thing to do with put all that in
25 there; clear it, make the gravel roads, the concrete boat

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